

From the 1st May, 1928, the Rent Restriction Continuance Act, 1927, provided (1) that the standard rent shall be determined on the basis of 7 per cent. on the capital value of the dwellinghouse as at the date of such determination (instead of on the 1914 value), exclusive of rates, insurance, repairs, and depreciation (as before); (2) that the Act shall cease to operate except where, on the application of the tenant, a Magistrate otherwise orders; in deciding the question the Magistrate shall have regard to the greater hardship that may be caused to either party concerned. Subject to the following paragraph, the provisions do not apply to houses first let after the 9th November, 1920.

By the Rent Restriction Extension Act, 1931 (passed 31st July, 1931) the provisions were further continued until the 1st August, 1932, and were extended to cover dwellinghouses in the Hawke's Bay earthquake area let on the 3rd February, 1931 (the date of the earthquake) or since that date at a rental not exceeding £104 per annum. By section 68 of the Finance Act, 1932, the legislation was further continued until the 31st October, 1932, when it will expire unless further extended.

FOOTWEAR REGULATION ACT.

There were 1,878 inspections made throughout the Dominion under this Act, and stocks of footwear were carefully examined. The arrangement made with the Customs Department whereby all imported footwear is examined in the Customs-shed before release is still being continued.

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES ACT.

The regulations under the Act provide for the reverification of weights, measures, and weighing and measuring instruments in use for trade purposes. The articles verified or reverified during the year are summarized hereunder:—

	Submitted.	Incorrect.
Weights	31,895	3,823
Measures	5,266	493
Weighing-instruments	20,093	2,116
Measuring-instruments	6,768	1,839
Bottles—Milk, cream, or oil	302,233	29
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	366,255	8,300

In addition to the reverification work referred to, the Department has carried out surprise tests of appliances on the owner's premises, 8,423 visits being made to business premises in this connection. The net-weight and standard-weight provisions of the regulations also received attention, 1,052 visits of inspection being made. There were 22 prosecutions for various breaches under this Act, convictions being obtained in 21 cases and fines amounting to £50 10s. being imposed. The other case was withdrawn. Verification fees earned totalled £8,817 12s. (previous year, £8,935 6s. 11d.); decrease, £117 14s. 11d.

During the period the following fifteen new designs of weighing and measuring instruments were submitted under clause 4, Part II, of the regulations for approval for use for trade in the Dominion, viz. :—

Weighing—		
Spring balances	2
Self-indicating (counter and platform) scales	6
Personal-weighing machines	2
Automatic weighing-machines	1
Measuring—		
Petrol-pumps and equipment	1
Drum-filling instruments	3
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Total	15

Of these, six have been approved, 6 rejected, and 3 are still under consideration.

Special attention was paid during the year to the weight of bread. In one town, owing to the price-cutting methods adopted, several bakers were tempted to reduce the weight of loaves. Prompt measures were taken by the Department's Inspectors, and several prosecutions resulted.

The regulations applying to the sale of coal, coke, and firewood provide that coal sold by retail must be in quantities of 1 cwt. or $1\frac{2}{3}$ cwts. (viz., twelve bags to the ton). Provision is made, however, for the sale of quantities less than 1 cwt. if sold and delivered to the purchaser on the premises of the seller.

Representations were made that the prevention of the delivery of coal off the seller's premises in less than 1 cwt. quantities was a distinct hardship at the present time, in view of the depressed conditions. Consequently, the regulations were amended early in the year to provide for the delivery of $\frac{1}{2}$ cwt. quantities.

Inspections have been made from time to time to ensure that the regulations were being complied with.